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NWSC

Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition

May 28, 2004

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Ms. Robin Sweeney
EIS Document Manager
Office of National Transportation
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
U.S. Department of Energy
1551 Hillshire Drive, M/S 011
Las Vegas, NV 89134

Re: NWSC Comments to the DOE's Record of Decision on Mode of Transportation and Nevada Rail Corridor for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, NV.

Dear Ms. Sweeney:

The members of the Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition (NWSC) welcome the Department of Energy's (DOE) issuance of its decision on the mode of transportation and the selection of the Caliente rail corridor in Nevada for the disposal of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) and high-level radioactive waste (HLRW) at Yucca Mountain.

The DOE made the right decision on the mostly rail scenario that was analyzed in the Department's Final Environmental Impact Statement as the transportation mode both on a national basis and the State of Nevada, relying on a combination of rail, truck and possibly barge to ship SNF and HLRW to Yucca Mountain. We are encouraged that the Department's decision also took into consideration the risk of sabotage, including terrorism, human health, environmental impacts that could occur during shipping of the material, construction of a rail line, upgrades of existing highways in Nevada, and traffic fatalities under different scenarios during the 24-year period shipping the SNF and HLRW to Yucca Mountain.

The NWSC is encouraged that the DOE will be issuing a Draft Rail Alignment EIS (EIS) to determine the exact alignment within the Caliente corridor and that the Department will be cooperating with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Surface Transportation Board in the preparation of the EIS. We trust the DOE to work closely with the local communities, landowners, counties and Tribes to ensure that the associated work with the transportation planning, equipment acquisition and mobilization is carried out in a timely manner.

The NWSC is comprised of 45 organizations in 25 states, including state regulators, state attorneys general, nuclear electric utilities and associate members working together to hold the Federal government accountable for its contractual and statutory obligations to remove spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive material from nuclear power plants across the nation to interim storage and to a permanent repository.

Sincerely,



LeRoy Koppendrayner
Commissioner, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and
Chairman, Nuclear Waste Strategy Coalition